(c) The project site was selected in 1975 when there were no residential colonies nearby. The project was at no stage referred to the Government of India. At the State level, approvals were obtained on the fire safety aspects. Due to recent controversy, construction work has been halted on the project.

Second stage of Indira Gandhi Canal Project

1013. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) when the Indira Gandhi Canal's revised second-stage project was approved by the Government of Rajasthan and since when the project is awaiting approval by the Planning Commission;

(b) what are the reasons for delay in the approval of the project and upto what time the execution of the project is likely to be delayed as a result thereof;

(c) what is the anticipated percentage of cost escalation due to delay in its approval by the Planning Commission; and

(d) what steps have been taken by Government to examine and clear the project without further delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The Indira Gandhi Canal's revised second stage project estimated to cost Rs. 943 crores was considered by the Advisory Committee on Irrigation, Flood Control and Multipurpose Projects of the Planning Commission on 18-4-1986 and was recommended to the Planning Commission for acceptance subject to certain observations.

(b) to (d) Certain information on some observations made by the Committee is awaited from the State Government. The question of acceptance of the project would be considered as soon as complete information is received from the State Government. Hence the project is not pending for action in the Planning Commission at present. The project is, howeved, under implementation as it was originally accepted by Planning Commission in 1972.

Research and Development plan in Industry

1014. PROF. CHANDRESH P. THAKUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether within the current thrust for modernisation of various sectors, there is a strategic Research and Development plan in the following areas, (i) Oilseeds production and extraction, (ii) post-harvest processing and packaging of food items; (iii) Thermal power; (iv) Steel; (v) Surface transportation; and (vi) Informatics;

(b) what progress has been made in implementing these plans, if any, at the level of the industry, both public and private; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to overcome the technology gap for quality improvement, cost reduction and higher productivity, in the absence of necessary indigenous research and development support and also substantial progress in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) to (c) Information is being collected, and will be laid on the Table of the House.